

International Weather and Crop Summary

March 27 - April 2, 2005

International Weather and Crop Highlights and Summaries
provided by USDA/WAOB

HIGHLIGHTS

EUROPE: Showers further alleviated developing drought in the Iberian Peninsula.

FSU-WESTERN: Unseasonably cold weather continued to prevail across the region, keeping winter grains dormant and delaying early spring fieldwork.

AUSTRALIA: Warm, mostly dry weather favored summer crop maturation and harvesting.

MIDDLE EAST: Showers benefited greening to heading winter wheat in Turkey.

NORTHWESTERN AFRICA: Dry weather and above-normal temperatures increased crop stress in Morocco, while promoting winter grain development in Algeria and Tunisia.

SOUTH AFRICA: Across the corn belt, warm, showery weather aided summer crop maturation while increasing moisture reserves for winter wheat establishment.

EASTERN ASIA: Unseasonable warmth promoted the development of winter wheat and rapeseed.

SOUTHEAST ASIA: Beneficial showers continued over Indonesia and Malaysia.

BRAZIL: Rain soaked Rio Grande do Sul, but other locations in southern Brazil still await significant drought relief.

ARGENTINA: Locally heavy rain raised concern for unharvested cotton but otherwise increased moisture for agriculture.

March 2005

MONTHLY DATA FROM SELECTED FOREIGN CITIES CLIMATE PREDICTION CENTER-NCEP-NWS-NOAA

*** DATA NOT AVAILABLE

COUNTRY	CITY	TEMPERATURE (C)				PRECIPITATION (MM)			
		AVG MAX	AVG MIN	HI MAX	LO MIN	DPART AVG	F/NRM	TOTAL	DPART F/NRM
NORWAY	OSLO	2	-8	13	-23	-3	-1.3	56	-2
SWEDEN	STOCKHOLM	***	***	7	-8	***	***	***	***
FINLAN	HELSINKI	-2	-11	10	-21	-6	-4.4	6	-29
UKINGD	ABERDEEN	9	4	17	-3	6	1.1	62	2
	CARDIFF	11	6	18	-1	9	0.7	63	-11
	LONDON	12	5	20	-5	8	0.5	43	2
IRELAN	DUBLIN	11	5	17	-1	8	0.9	21	-33
ICELAN	REYKJAVIK	6	2	12	-8	4	3.3	26	-57
DENMAR	COPENHAGEN	5	-2	10	-13	2	-1.3	25	-11
LUXEMB	LUXEMBOURG	9	2	20	-12	6	0.9	26	-40
SWITZE	ZURICH	10	2	21	-14	6	0.8	49	-19
	GENEVA	12	2	21	-10	7	1.2	42	-24
FRANCE	PARIS/ORLY	12	4	23	-9	8	0.0	52	9
	STRASBOURG	11	2	22	-14	7	0.1	50	14
	BOURGES	13	3	24	-11	8	0.7	44	-9
	BORDEAUX	15	5	27	-8	10	0.6	39	-32
	TOULOUSE	14	4	25	-8	9	0.0	23	-30
	MARSEILLE	15	5	21	-7	10	-0.4	13	-30
SPAIN	VALLADOLID	15	2	23	-8	9	0.3	14	-10
	MADRID	17	3	23	-6	10	-0.3	8	-9
	SEVILLE	21	11	31	3	16	0.1	28	2
PORTUG	LISBON	18	10	29	0	14	0.3	34	-48
GERMAN	HAMBURG	7	1	18	-13	4	-0.6	41	-22
	BERLIN	8	0	18	-8	4	-1.1	15	-26
	DUSSELDORF	11	4	20	-5	8	0.6	41	-27
	LEIPZIG	8	0	18	-9	4	-0.7	19	-17
	DRESDEN	7	0	18	-9	3	-1.1	23	-18
	STUTT GART	9	0	21	-19	5	-0.6	48	4
	NURNBERG	8	-1	19	-18	4	-1.1	22	-22
	AUGSBURG	8	-2	19	-24	3	-1.8	52	11
AUSTRI	VIENNA	8	-1	21	-14	4	-1.8	13	-27
	INNSBRUCK	12	-1	22	-16	6	0.5	32	-28
CZECHR	PRAGUE	6	-2	17	-15	2	-1.6	16	-13
POLAND	WARSAW	4	-4	13	-15	0	-2.5	38	8
	LODZ	4	-3	15	-11	1	-2.6	39	3
	KATOWICE	5	-3	18	-14	1	-2.5	26	-18
HUNGAR	BUDAPEST	9	0	24	-11	5	-1.2	18	-9
YUGOSL	BELGRADE	10	2	22	-12	6	-1.5	32	-15
ROMANI	BUCHAREST	10	-2	22	-20	4	-1.3	30	-9
BULGAR	SOFIA	9	0	20	-10	5	-0.5	51	17
ITALY	MILAN	15	4	27	-7	10	0.8	38	-26
	VERONA	14	2	22	-10	8	-0.3	21	-31
	VENICE	13	3	20	-7	8	-0.4	1	-47
	GENOA	14	8	21	-3	11	-0.9	30	-54
	ROME	15	4	20	-4	10	-1.3	80	20
	NAPLES	15	6	22	-3	11	-0.5	69	-8
GREECE	THESSALONIKA	14	5	26	-4	10	0.1	38	-2
	LARISSA	15	4	26	-6	10	0.3	63	25
	ATHENS	16	9	22	2	12	0.3	16	-38
TURKEY	ISTANBUL	11	4	17	-2	7	-0.2	38	-18
	ANKARA	11	-2	20	-11	4	0.6	63	23
CYPRUS	LARNACA	20	9	24	4	15	1.2	17	-26
ESTONI	TALLINN	-2	-10	7	-19	-6	-4.4	4	-30
RUSSIA	ST.PETERSBURG	-2	-10	7	-17	-6	-4.7	26	-7
LITHUA	KAUNAS	0	-7	6	-23	-4	-4.0	49	11
BELARU	MINSK	-1	-7	6	-21	-4	-3.3	69	25
RUSSIA	KAZAN	-6	-13	2	-23	-9	-4.4	56	33
	MOSCOW	-3	-9	4	-18	-6	-4.4	40	7
	YEKATERINBURG	-2	-10	4	-16	-6	-2.1	55	39
	OMSK	-1	-9	5	-23	-5	3.0	22	8
KAZAKH	KUSTANAY	-2	-9	3	-20	-6	2.6	37	22
RUSSIA	BARNAUL	1	-8	9	-21	-3	4.5	11	-5
	KHABAROVSK	-3	-12	4	-25	-8	-0.9	10	-9
	VLADIVOSTOK	1	-6	8	-14	-2	-0.5	15	-8
UKRAIN	KIEV	2	-5	12	-15	-1	-2.6	54	19
	LVOV	4	-4	16	-15	0	-1.7	54	16
	KIROVOGRAD	2	-5	12	-19	-2	-2.9	16	-18
	ODESSA	6	-1	19	-13	3	-0.3	19	-9
RUSSIA	SARATOV	-3	-8	3	-15	-6	-1.4	60	40
UKRAIN	KHARKOV	0	-6	8	-13	-3	-2.9	24	-5

Based on Preliminary Reports

March 2005

COUNTRY	CITY	TEMPERATURE				PRECIPITATION				COUNTRY	CITY	TEMPERATURE				PRECIPITATION			
		(C)				(MM)						(C)				(MM)			
		AVG MAX	AVG MIN	HI MAX	LO MIN	DPART F/NRM	TOTAL	DPART F/NRM	AVG MAX			AVG MIN	HI MAX	LO MIN	DPART F/NRM	TOTAL	DPART F/NRM		
RUSSIA	VOLGOGRAD	0	-6	6	-16	-3	-1.7	43	20	BURKIN	OUAGADOUGOU	40	28	42	23	34	2.8	0	-5
	ASTRAKHAN	6	-3	12	-8	1	-0.2	21	6	COTE D	ABIDJAN	34	27	36	21	30	2.2	103	10
	KRASNODAR	6	-1	16	-7	2	-2.7	127	87	MOZAMB	MAPUTO	29	22	34	18	26	-0.3	57	-41
	ORENBURG	-2	-9	3	-18	-6	0.4	68	49	ZAMBIA	LUSAKA	***	***	32	16	***	***	2	-141
KAZAKH	TSELINOGRAD	0	-7	9	-16	-3	5.3	29	-1	ZIMBAB	KADOMA	30	16	35	11	23	-0.7	53	-39
	KARAGANDA	2	-5	13	-13	-1	6.0	37	20	S AFRI	PRETORIA	26	15	33	13	21	-0.3	40	-53
GEORGI	TBILISI	11	3	21	-5	7	0.3	22	-8		JOHANNESBURG	23	13	29	10	18	-0.1	105	5
UZBEKI	TASHKENT	19	8	26	-2	13	4.9	62	-2		BETHAL	24	11	30	9	18	-0.6	57	-35
TURKME	ASHKHABAD	18	8	28	-2	13	3.5	90	48		DURBAN	27	20	30	16	24	-0.2	121	-4
SYRIA	DAMASCUS	21	5	30	-2	13	2.2	0	-21		CAPE TOWN	26	15	34	7	21	1.2	9	-11
ISRAEL	JERUSALEM	17	10	28	5	14	2.6	45	-49	CANADA	TORONTO	3	-6	14	-14	-2	-1.3	33	-23
PAKIST	KARACHI	31	21	37	18	26	1.3	0	-10		MONTREAL	1	-8	16	-18	-3	-1.0	44	-25
INDIA	AMRITSAR	25	11	30	7	18	-0.5	64	24		WINNIPEG	-2	-14	7	-26	-8	-2.2	21	-2
	NEW DELHI	31	17	35	13	24	1.5	42	27		REGINA	-1	-10	5	-22	-6	-0.6	25	7
	AHMEDABAD	35	20	38	17	28	0.2	0	***		SASKATOON	-1	-11	7	-22	-6	-0.3	36	21
	INDORE	34	17	38	12	26	0.4	9	8		LETHBRIDGE	8	-6	21	-18	1	1.1	38	13
	CALCUTTA	34	23	37	18	28	0.9	75	34		CALGARY	6	-6	21	-16	0	2.0	15	-2
	VERAVAL	31	20	38	17	26	0.5	0	***		EDMONTON	4	-5	13	-19	0	2.2	16	1
	BOMBAY	32	21	36	18	27	-0.4	0	***		VANCOUVER	12	5	15	0	8	1.7	131	18
	POONA	35	15	39	11	25	-0.3	1	0	MEXICO	GUADALAJARA	26	13	31	8	19	0.1	1	-5
	BEGAMPET	36	20	39	16	28	-0.5	23	9		TLAXCALA	24	9	28	4	16	0.4	0	-5
	VISHAKHAPATNAM	31	25	32	23	28	0.2	7	-4		ORIZABA	24	19	34	11	21	3.5	17	-16
	MADRAS	34	25	37	23	29	1.0	2	-3	BERMUD	ST GEORGES	20	15	23	11	17	-1.3	143	38
	MANGALORE	34	23	35	22	28	-0.3	0	-5	BAHAMA	NASSAU	27	20	32	13	23	0.8	17	-32
HONGKO	HONG KONG INT	21	16	29	8	19	-0.4	53	-23	CUBA	HAVANA	28	19	31	10	23	0.4	48	-1
N KORE	PYONGYANG	7	-2	16	-9	2	-1.3	0	-30	JAMAIC	KINGSTON	31	25	33	23	28	1.7	2	-22
S KORE	SEOUL	9	1	18	-7	5	-1.3	13	-38	P RICO	SAN JUAN	31	22	33	20	27	1.2	0	-54
JAPAN	SAPPORO	3	-3	9	-11	0	-0.2	124	44	GUADEL	RAIZET	30	22	31	19	26	0.9	19	-48
	NAGOYA	13	4	19	-1	8	0.0	134	19	MARTIN	LAMENTIN	30	23	32	21	27	1.8	35	-44
	TOKYO	13	5	19	1	9	0.3	74	-41	BARBAD	BRIDGETOWN	31	25	31	23	28	1.8	18	-19
	YOKOHAMA	13	6	18	1	10	0.5	100	-49	TRINID	PORT OF SPAIN	33	23	34	21	28	1.8	43	12
	KYOTO	13	4	19	-1	8	-0.6	88	-34	COLOMB	BOGOTA	***	***	22	1	***	***	***	***
	OSAKA	13	6	20	0	10	0.4	77	-22	VENEZU	CARACAS	31	24	32	23	27	2.0	0	-13
THAILA	PHITSANULOK	35	23	39	15	29	-0.7	6	-23	F GUIA	CAYENNE	31	24	34	22	27	1.3	215	-128
	BANGKOK	34	26	38	18	30	0.2	17	-14	BRAZIL	FORTALEZA	31	26	33	23	28	0.7	130	-180
MALAYS	KUALA LUMPUR	35	25	37	22	30	2.2	230	-6		RECIFE	32	27	33	25	30	0.5	70	-128
VIETNA	HANOI	22	18	28	12	20	-0.6	28	-18		CAMPO GRANDE	35	23	39	20	29	3.4	150	2
CHINA	HARBIN	1	-9	11	-21	-4	-1.1	3	-6		FRANCA	27	19	30	16	23	0.7	256	49
	HAMI	16	0	24	-9	8	3.6	0	-1		RIO DE JANEIRO	31	24	36	20	28	0.8	121	-13
	LANCHOW	***	***	15	-4	***	***	***	***		LONDRINA	32	20	38	16	26	2.3	62	-86
	BEIJING	12	1	25	-7	6	0.2	0	-8		SANTA MARIA	31	18	39	14	25	1.6	55	-84
	TIENTSIN	12	0	25	-8	6	-0.4	0	-7		TORRES	26	20	29	16	23	-2.4	200	92
	LHASA	14	0	17	-3	7	1.6	1	-2	PERU	LIMA	26	20	28	19	23	0.5	0	0
	KUNMING	19	9	24	1	14	0.4	39	21	BOLIVI	LA PAZ	16	3	19	-1	10	0.7	35	-74
	CHENGCHOW	14	3	23	-2	9	0.9	10	-19	CHILE	SANTIAGO	27	11	33	5	19	1.4	19	14
	YEHCHANG	17	8	24	0	12	1.5	38	-21	ARGENT	IGUAZU	32	20	38	17	26	1.5	57	-73
	HANKOW	15	8	24	-2	12	1.2	47	-43		FORMOSA	34	20	39	15	27	1.4	136	-17
	CHUNGKING	17	11	23	5	14	0.8	71	33		CERES	29	17	39	10	23	0.2	355	215
	CHIHKIANG	14	8	23	1	11	0.4	63	-15		CORDOBA	26	16	35	10	21	0.2	138	16
	WU HU	15	5	26	-2	10	0.5	87	-7		RIO CUARTO	25	14	33	5	20	-0.5	76	-38
	SHANGHAI	14	5	24	-2	9	0.4	43	-44		ROSARIO	26	15	36	9	21	-0.4	379	247
	NANCHANG	14	8	22	-1	11	0.3	128	-47		BUENOS AIRES	26	14	35	7	20	-0.6	160	66
	TAIPEI	21	15	28	6	18	-0.8	257	62		SANTA ROSA	27	13	36	4	20	0.3	109	23
	CANTON	21	14	28	6	18	-0.2	124	38		TRES ARROYOS	25	12	32	3	19	0.4	29	-52
	NANNING	20	14	33	5	17	-0.6	64	8	MARSHA	MAJURO	29	27	30	24	28	0.6	239	35
CANARY	LAS PALMAS	22	15	28	12	18	-0.2	17	1	NEW CA	NOUMEA	28	23	31	21	26	0.0	74	-75
MOROCC	CASABLANCA	21	13	37	8	17	2.1	26	-14	FIJI	NAUSORI	31	23	33	21	27	0.7	458	68
	MARRAKECH	24	12	36	6	18	2.2	22	-17	SAMOA	PAGO PAGO	32	27	33	25	29	1.5	321	38
ALGERI	ALGER	18	8	28	-1	13	0.0	51	-8	TAHITI	PAPEETE	32	25	33	23	28	0.8	116	-61
	BATNA	18	4	27	-5	11	1.7	21	-41	PNEWGU	PORT MORESBY	30	25	32	23	28	0.8	127	-61
TUNISI	TUNIS	19	10	28	3	14	0.9	42	2	NZEALA	AUCKLAND	24	16	26	12	20	***	40	***
NIGER	NIAMEY	41	27	42	23	34	3.1	0	-3		WELLINGTON	19	14	25	10	17	***	150	***
MALI	TIMBUKTU	38	***	42	3	***	***	4	4	AUSTRA	DARWIN	32	26	34	23	29	0.8	356	-18
	BAMAKO	39	***	42	18	***	***	4	1		BRISBANE	27	18	32	13	23	-0.9	25	-98
MAURIT	NOUAKCHOTT	33	20	43	15	26	2.3	0	-1		PERTH	31	18	43	12	25	1.6	71	57
SENEG	DAKAR	26	19	31	17	23	1.9	0	0		CEDUNA	27	13	39	5	20	-0.1	0	-14
CHAGOS	DIEGO GARCIA	32	27	33	23	29	0.7	273	73		ADELAIDE	24	13	36	8	19	-1.4	10	-12
LIBYA	TRIPOLI	24	11	36	3	17	1.9	8	-25		MELBOURNE	23	11	38	3	17	-1.1	7	-23
	BENGHAZI	20	10	29	4	15	0.3	33	10		WAGGA	28	12	38	5	20	-0.7	6	-35
EGYPT	CAIRO	24	13	31	8	19	1.2	8	2		CANBERRA	24	10	34	3	17	-0.4	42	-8
	ASWAN	31	15	38	10	23	1.3	0	0	INDONE	SERANG	32	25	33	23	28	0.8	170	-15
KENYA	NAIROBI	29	16	30	13	22	1.3	102	36	PHILIP	MANILA	32	25	35	22	28	-0.2	8	-10
TANZAN	DAR ES SALAAM	33	24	34	19	29	1.4	75	-58										
GABON	LIBREVILLE	32	25	35	22	28	1.1	302	-103										
TOGO	LOME	33	26	37	22	30	1.7	132	62										

Based on Preliminary Reports

EUROPE

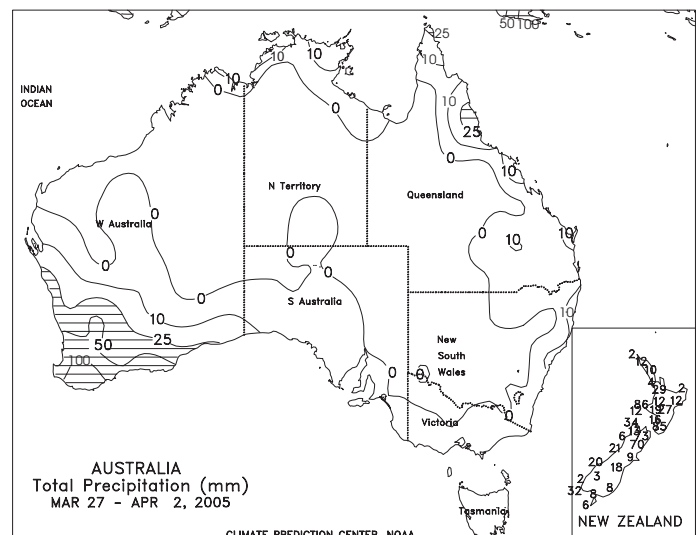
For a second consecutive week, much-needed rain fell across the Iberian Peninsula, while mild, wet weather favored winter grain development in central Europe. A pair of slow-moving cold fronts brought beneficial showers to the Iberian Peninsula, with the heaviest rain (25-50 mm) falling across central and northern Portugal. In southern Portugal, where drought conditions have been most pronounced, rainfall was generally less than 10 mm, maintaining concerns over moisture availability for pastures and citrus. In western Spain, light to moderate showers (5-20 mm) provided limited relief from short-term dryness, while dry weather (less than 10mm) prevailed in eastern growing areas maintaining short-term moisture deficits. More rain is needed across the Iberian Peninsula to further ease ongoing drought and ensure adequate moisture for greening to heading winter wheat and spring-planted summer crops. In central Europe, above-normal temperatures (3 to 5 degrees C above normal) and periods of light to moderate rain (10-35 mm) maintained favorable conditions for vegetative winter grains in France, Germany, and the Benelux Countries. In contrast, lingering freezes coupled with weekly average temperatures less than 5 degrees C in eastern Europe kept winter grains dormant. Elsewhere, showers boosted moisture supplies in England, while a return of rainy weather slowed fieldwork in the Balkans.

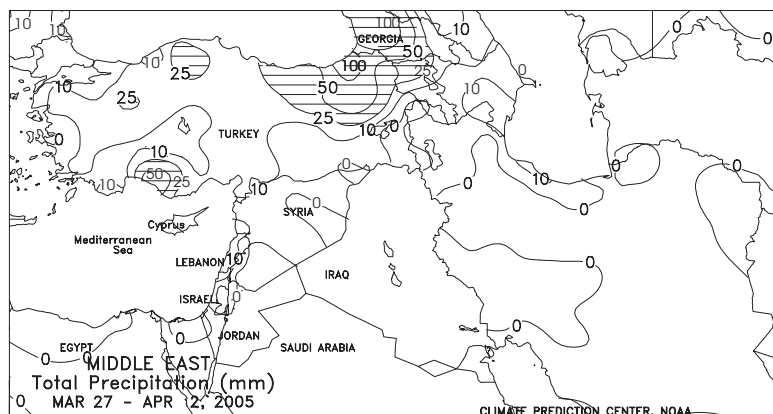
**FSU-WESTERN**

Unseasonably cold weather continued to prevail across most of Ukraine and Belarus, with weekly temperatures averaging 2 to 6 degrees C below normal. In Russia, temperatures averaged 2 to 6 degrees C below normal in the Southern Region and 4 to 8 degrees C below normal in the Central and Volga Regions. The unseasonably cold weather kept winter grains dormant in most areas and delayed early spring fieldwork, usually underway in southern Ukraine and the Southern Region in Russia. Typically, winter grains begin breaking dormancy in southern Ukraine and the southern portion of the Southern Region in Russia by the end of March. Extreme minimum temperatures for the week ranged from -10 to -5 degrees C in Ukraine and the Russian Southern Region. A moderate to deep snow cover extended from eastern Belarus across the Central and Volga Regions in Russia, protecting winter grains from several days of bitterly cold weather (minimum temperatures ranging from -20 to -10 degrees C). Light if any precipitation was observed in most areas. The exception was in the extreme southern portion of the Southern Region, where moderate rain (25-50 mm or more) fell during the middle of the week. At week's end, milder air from Europe spread into the western portion of the region, raising temperatures to more seasonable levels.

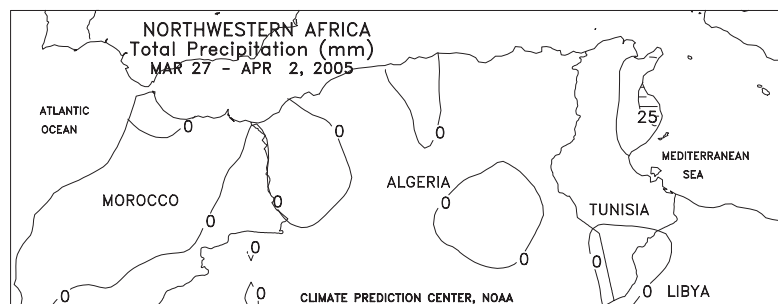
**AUSTRALIA**

In Queensland and northern New South Wales, warm, mostly dry weather favored summer crop maturation and harvesting during much of the week. Although midweek showers (2-10 mm, locally near 25 mm) maintained moisture supplies for immature summer crops in eastern Australia, the rain was relatively short-lived, causing only brief delays in fieldwork. Temperatures in eastern Australia averaged about 1 degree C below normal, with high temperatures generally in the upper 20s to lower 30s degrees C.

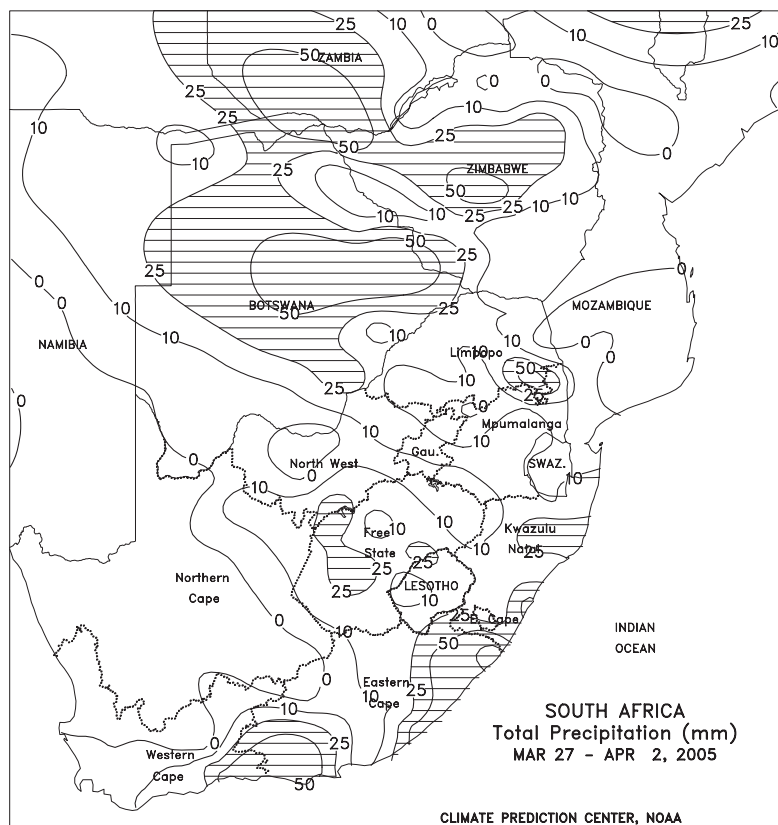


**MIDDLE EAST**

Mild, wet weather provided favorable conditions for winter grain development across much of the Middle East. A pair of slow-moving disturbances brought widespread, locally heavy rain (10-50 mm) to Turkey's winter areas. In northwestern Iran, lingering late-season cold (temperatures as low as -10 degrees C) may have caused some burnback to greening winter grains, but minimum temperatures were insufficient to cause widespread damage. In contrast, dry weather increased short-term moisture deficits in Syria. Dry weather facilitated cotton planting in central and eastern Iran.

**NORTHWESTERN AFRICA**

High pressure maintained dry, unseasonably warm weather across much of the region for a third consecutive week. After heavy early-month rains in Morocco increased soil moisture reserves, recent dryness has renewed concerns about the lack of adequate moisture for crop development. In addition, unseasonably warm weather preceded the passage of a strong cold front, pushing daytime highs into the upper 30s degrees C in Morocco's western and southern growing areas. The warmest conditions were observed on March 31, when temperatures exceeded 35 degrees C for up to 5 hours across Morocco's southern growing areas, stressing and possibly damaging winter grains in the temperature-sensitive heading and flowering stage. The early-season heat was replaced by seasonably cool conditions with the passage of a strong cold front on April 1, limiting heat stress to 2 days (March 30 and 31). Recent dryness has further highlighted the need for more rain over the upcoming weeks to maintain adequate moisture supplies for crop development. In Algeria and northern Tunisia, mostly dry weather prevailed over winter wheat in the jointing stage, although isolated rain showers (5-15 mm) in northeastern Tunisia boosted moisture supplies.

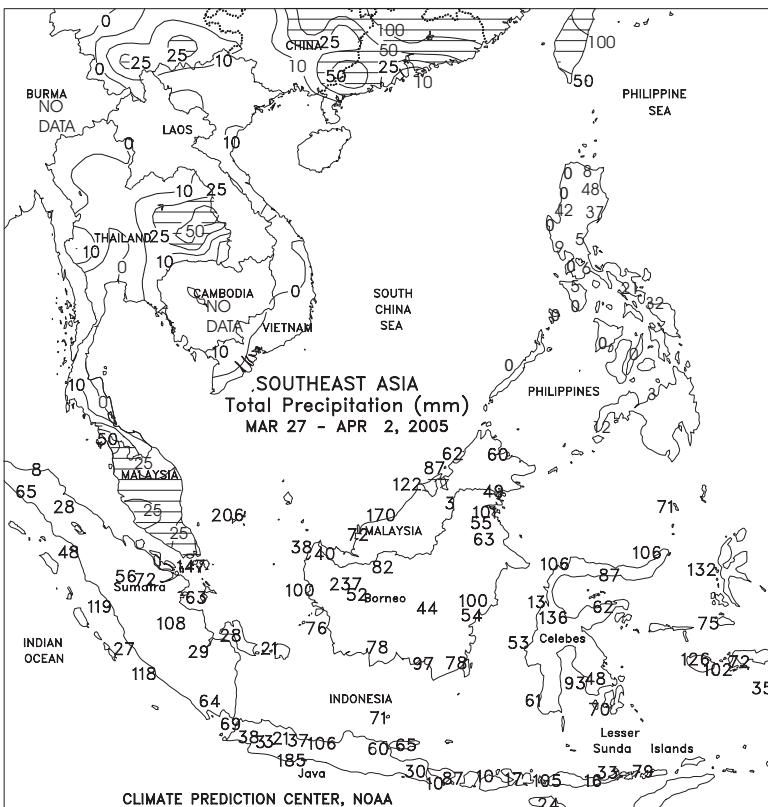
**SOUTH AFRICA**

Across the corn belt, warmer weather (temperatures averaging up to 2 degrees C above normal, with highs reaching the upper 20s degrees C) promoted summer crop maturation after several weeks of below-normal temperatures. In addition, scattered showers (5-25 mm or more) increased moisture levels for the upcoming winter wheat crop in Free State and southern North West. Closer to the coast, locally heavy showers (25-50 mm or more) continued over most crop areas of Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal, providing a late-season boost to immature summer crops, including sugarcane, and livestock. However, unfavorable dryness persisted in winter wheat areas of Western Cape, where moisture reserves remain limited for even germination and establishment.



EASTERN ASIA

Unseasonably warm weather spurred the growth of winter wheat and rapeseed throughout China's main growing areas. In major winter wheat areas on the North China Plain, weekly temperatures averaged 2 to 4 degrees C above normal, with extreme maximum temperatures ranging in the low 20s degrees C. In major winter rapeseed areas along the Yangtze Valley, weekly temperatures averaged 1 to 3 degrees C above normal, with daytime highs reaching into the middle 20s C. Mostly dry weather extended from the Yangtze Valley northward through the North China Plain, favoring early spring fieldwork. Winter wheat on the North China Plain was in the vegetative stage of development, while the winter rapeseed crop along the Yangtze Valley was in or nearing the heading stage. In crop areas south of the Yangtze Valley, moderate to locally heavy rains (25-100 mm or more) provided abundant moisture for merging single-crop rice and other newly planted summer crops. Elsewhere, seasonable temperatures accompanied mostly dry weather in Manchuria and the Korean Peninsula. Although high temperatures ranged in the lower to middle teens in Manchuria, lows ranged from -10 to -5 degrees C, preventing early planting in most areas. Widespread precipitation (10-25 mm or more) fell throughout Japan.



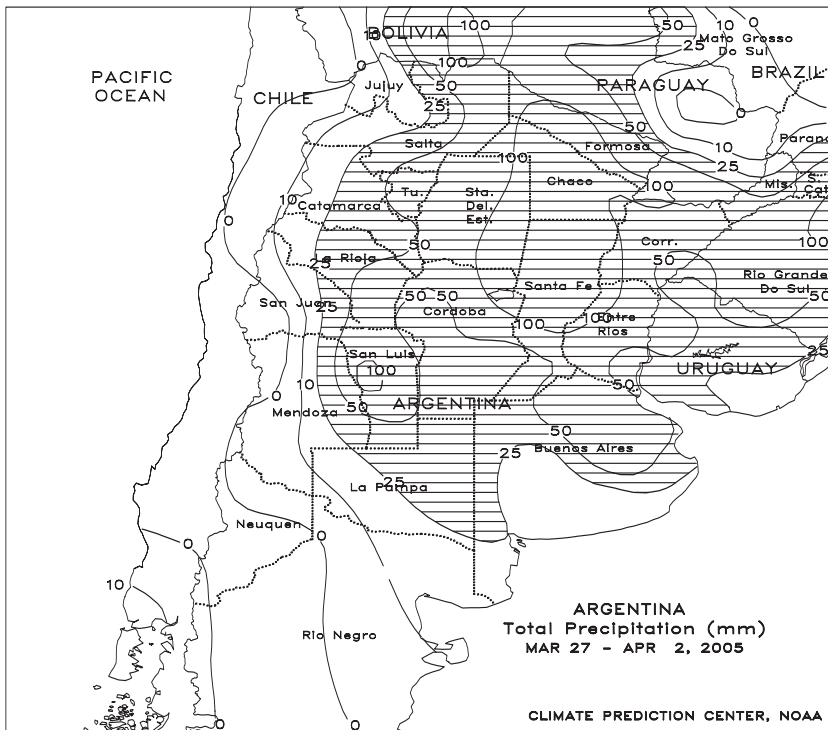
SOUTHEAST ASIA

Moderate to heavy showers (25-100 mm or more) continued throughout Indonesia and Malaysia, further increasing moisture for oil palm and rice cultivation after a prolonged dry spell. Farther north, however, warmer and drier than normal weather returned to Indochina, although beneficial rainfall lingered over rice areas of eastern Thailand. The southwest monsoon usually becomes established over the region during April. Elsewhere, scattered showers increased moisture for rice, corn and other crops in the eastern and southern Philippines, but mostly dry weather was recorded elsewhere.



BRAZIL

Moderate to heavy rain (50-100 mm or more) soaked Rio Grande do Sul and Santa Catarina, providing additional drought relief after the return of seasonal rains a few weeks ago. While coming too late for soybeans and corn, the moisture will ultimately benefit winter wheat, which is usually planted in southernmost growing areas during May. However, mostly dry, warmer than normal weather (temperatures averaging 2-4 degrees C above normal, with highs in the lower and middle 30s degrees C) dominated the remainder of the south (Parana, Mato Grosso do Sul, and Sao Paulo), further limiting moisture reserves for winter grown crops, including a significant portion of those states' corn crops. Elsewhere, scattered, moderate to heavy showers (25-50 mm or more) continued across Mato Grosso, Goias, and most of the northeast, including most coastal cocoa and sugarcane areas. According to reports coming from within Brazil, the wetness raises some concern for outbreaks of disease, including rust, but harvesting has advanced beyond the midway point in Mato Grosso, lowering the potential of significant damage.



ARGENTINA

Widespread, locally heavy rain (25-100 mm or more) soaked most major growing areas. In the north, the rainfall increased moisture for livestock but raised concern for unharvested cotton from Santa Fe to Formosa, where rainfall exceeded 100 mm. These areas include important production areas in Chaco and eastern Santiago del Estero. Farther south, the moisture was welcomed for immature second-crop soybeans but continued to hamper harvesting of main season crops. Moderate showers (10-25 mm or more) in the southern wheat belt increased soil moisture reserves for the 2005/06 crop, which should be planted from May to July. Temperatures averaged near to below normal in Argentina's central and southern agricultural districts, but freezing weather was confined to locations outside of major crop areas. According to Argentina's Ministry of Agriculture (SAGPyA), sunflowers were 85 percent harvested as of March 31, compared with 83 percent last season. In addition, SAGPyA reported that corn and soybeans were 35 and 20 percent harvested, respectively. Soybean harvesting was running close to last seasons' pace, but corn harvesting was down about 8 percentage points, largely due to recent problems with locally heavy rainfall.